

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 15 November 2011.

PRESENT

Cllr J G Jamieson (Chairman)
Cllr M R Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Executive Members:	Cllrs	Mrs C Hegley K C Matthews B J Spurr	Cllrs	R C Stay Mrs P E Turner MBE M A G Versallion
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Deputy Executive Members:	Cllrs	Mrs A Barker A D Brown I Dalgarno D J Hopkin	Cllrs	A M Turner B Wells R D Wenham J N Young
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Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	P N Aldis A R Bastable M C Blair D Bowater Mrs R J Drinkwater C C Gomm Mrs S A Goodchild	Cllrs	Mrs D B Gurney D Jones D McVicar T Nicols B Saunders A Shadbolt N J Sheppard
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Officers in Attendance	Mr G Alderson Mr J Atkinson Mr R Carr Ms D Clarke Mr R Fox Mrs E Grant Mrs S Hobbs Mrs J Ogley Mr R Romans Mr J Unsworth Mr C Warboys	Director of Sustainable Communities Head of Legal and Democratic Services Chief Executive Interim Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation) Head of Development Planning and Housing Strategy Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services Committee Services Officer Director of Social Care, Health and Housing Minerals and Waste Team Leader Interim Assistant Chief Executive (Resources) Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer
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E/11/71 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

E/11/72 **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

Councillor Mrs Hegley declared a personal interest in Agenda item 10 'The Minerals and Waste Core Strategy' as she was the President of the Small-bore Rifle Club at Thorn Turn, Houghton Regis.

(b) **Personal and Prejudicial Interests:-**

None.

E/11/73 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Leader gave a presentation summarising the feedback received from the recent Residents Survey.

E/11/74 **Petitions**

In accordance with the Scheme of Public Participation set out in Annex 2 of Part 4 of the Constitution, the Executive received the following petitions:-

1. Petition 'To Save Leighton Buzzard Library Café'

The Chairman acknowledged that an e-petition had been submitted 'To Save Leighton Buzzard Library Café'. As the lead petitioner was not in attendance to present the petition, the Executive could not consider it.

2. Petition to request the Council to 'Build a footpath on Greenfield Hill in Pulloxhill following the deaths of two pedestrians since September 2010'

Mrs Tennant presented an e-petition and paper petition, containing a total of 728 signatures. Mrs Tennant acknowledged that she had been notified that the Council had agreed to build the footpath requested during this financial year. She requested that the Executive Member keep her informed of progress with the project.

Mrs Tennant also took the opportunity to raise two further issues that she would like the Council to consider in the future. Firstly, was the issue of traffic speeding outside Greenfield School and secondly was the extension of the footpath from Oak Drive into Pulloxhill village.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services thanked Mrs Tennant for presenting the petition and confirmed that design work had started on the footway that would be constructed on the east side of Greenfield Road. Mrs Tennant would be kept informed of progress. He also advised that any additional work would need to be prioritised alongside other requests for highways maintenance work.

E/11/75 **Public Participation**

The following statement was received in accordance with the Public Participation Scheme:

1. Mr M Marshall

Mr Marshall spoke to Agenda item 12 'Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy'. Mr Marshall commented on the following three areas:

- resident prioritisation;
- housing banding; and
- under-occupation.

The Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing thanked Mr Marshall for his comments and explained that the Local Lettings Policy would be consulted upon for a period of 12 weeks, with Parish Councils and other key stakeholders prior to consideration by the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She advised that Mr Marshall's comments would be included in the consultation process.

E/11/76 **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

RESOLVED

that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 November 2011 to 31 October 2012 be noted.

E/11/77 **Report from the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Review of Highways and Transportation**

The Executive considered a report from the Chairman of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) following a review of Highways and Transportation. A Highways and Transportation Task Force had met to consider and make recommendations to the Sustainable Communities OSC on the following:

- The Council's draft "Approach to Parking";
- The managing agency contract (MAC) with Amey LG; and
- The Council's draft approach to road and footway maintenance – "Approach to Delivering a Sustainable Highway Network".

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services thanked the Members of the Sustainable Communities OSC in full. A detailed response to the recommendations was tabled at the meeting. Members agreed to support the recommendations subject to recommendation 3:

“The Executive to resolve that residents’ parking zones should be used within controlled parking zones but in some cases residents’ parking schemes can be used in isolation outside of parking zones.”

The Executive Member explained that the only practical way to control parking, in many residential areas of Central Bedfordshire, was to use resident parking zones. The current cost to implement and administer these schemes had exceeded the revenue received. However, measures aimed at reducing administration costs were being introduced.

RESOLVED

to agree the response, attached at Appendix A to the minutes, to the recommendations from the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 October 2011.

E/11/78

Budget and Council Tax Consultation Policy

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources on the process for consulting on the draft budget. The report included feedback from the market research phase of public engagement in the budget setting process for 2012/13.

Reason for decision: To meet statutory responsibilities for consultation and to ensure that the Council was able to develop its draft budget informed by public views about priority issues.

RESOLVED

- 1. the feedback from the public research on issues relating to the 2012/13 budget be noted; and**
- 2. the proposed approach to consultation and communication with residents and stakeholders be agreed.**

E/11/79

The Minerals and Waste Core Strategy

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Strategic Planning and Economic Development that set out:

- the representations received from the Waste Core Strategy consultation in 2010;
- the Mineral Safeguarding Areas consultation in the spring of 2011; and
- the recommended responses to them.

The Executive's approval was sought for the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy to undergo consultation on issues of soundness, prior to its submission to the Secretary of State and to approve a revised Minerals and Waste Local Development Scheme 2011. Members were advised that Luton Borough Council and Bedford Borough Council had worked with Central Bedfordshire Council to produce the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy. The Executives at both these authorities had approved the Core Strategy for public consultation.

Reason for decision: To progress the development of the Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Executive notes:**
 - **the representations received from the Waste Core Strategy consultation in 2010;**
 - **the Minerals Safeguarding Areas consultation in the spring of 2011; and**
 - **the recommended responses to them;**
- 2. that the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Document be approved for public consultation on issues of soundness;**
- 3. that delegated authority be given to the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development, to make minor amendments to the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Document prior to consultation on issues of soundness;**
- 4. that the Minerals and Waste Local Development Scheme 2011 be approved.**

E/11/80

Economic Development Plan

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development that presented the proposed Economic Development Plan. The Economic Development Plan sought to affirm the Council's commitment to support sustainable economic growth in Central Bedfordshire. The plan followed extensive public consultation and had been positively received across a wide range of businesses, partners and organisations from across all sectors.

In response to a question on youth unemployment, the Executive Member explained that the Council would be focusing on securing and influencing the delivery of externally funded provision to ensure young people were better equipped for work and were able to access employment and training opportunities.

The Executive Member responsible for Economic Partnerships reported that the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) had been awarded £13.1m to help accelerate infrastructure, new homes and employment across the area. This reinforced the importance of the Economic Development Plan and the Council had the opportunity to put forward schemes for support from the SEMLEP funding.

Reason for decision: To put in place an up to date, targeted and shared corporate plan, in response to the need to achieve job growth (27,000 jobs by 2026) in Central Bedfordshire to help realise the area's economic potential.

RESOLVED

that the Economic Development Plan be endorsed.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

that the Economic Development Plan, as set out in the Executive report, be adopted as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

E/11/81

Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that proposed the adoption of the Central Bedfordshire Allocations Policy to enable the Council to discharge its statutory duties under the Part VI of the Housing Act 1996. The Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing moved the following amendment to recommendation 3, which was duly seconded:-

- “3. note the Local Lettings Policy in relation to Rural Exception sites in Central Bedfordshire, set out at Appendix C to the report, following further consideration from legal Counsel's advice. This policy will be consulted upon, with Parish Councils and other stakeholders for a period of 12 weeks, prior to consideration by the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and subsequent adoption by the Executive during 2012.”

Members noted that the Allocations Policy would be revisited during 2012/13 due to the introduction of the Localism Bill.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to meet its statutory obligation in meeting the diverse housing needs across Central Bedfordshire, whilst increasing customer choice and control.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Central Bedfordshire Allocations Policy, as set out at Appendix A to the report, be adopted as the Allocation Scheme for social housing in Central Bedfordshire;**

2. **that delegated authority be given to the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing, in consultation with the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing, to vary the operation of the Choice Based Lettings Scheme, where so doing is not a material change to the Allocations Policy. The delegation includes all operational matters related to cross border mobility, including the numbers and types of properties made available for cross border letting;**
3. **that the Local Lettings Policy be noted, in relation to Rural Exception sites in Central Bedfordshire set out at Appendix C to the report, following further consideration from legal Counsel's advice. This policy will be consulted upon, with Parish Councils and other stakeholders for a period of 12 weeks, prior to consideration by the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and subsequent adoption by the Executive during 2012; and**
4. **note the opportunities afforded by the Localism Bill to consider fundamental changes to the Allocations Policy during 2012, on which basis an updated Policy will be presented to the Executive during 2013.**

E/11/82

Capital Programme Review

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources setting out the proposed revised Capital Programme for 2011/12. The Executive Member moved the following amendments to the recommendations, which were duly seconded:-

- “1. as set out in the report;
2. approve a net additional £5.032m to the original Capital Programme for 2011/12 to fund the slippage from the previous years' Capital Programme. This includes slippage of £6.9m approved by the Executive in July 2011;
3. recognise that there will be slippage of some expenditure into future years, and accordingly authorise the Executive Member for Corporate Resources to approve expenditure in the current financial year in respect of schemes that are included in future years of the Capital Programme but which can be brought forward and delivered in 2011/12, provided that the borrowing limits approved for the Capital Programme for this financial year are not exceeded;
4. as set out in recommendation 3 in the report; and
5. as set out in recommendation 4 in the report.”

Reason for decision: To facilitate the effective delivery of capital projects, with a consequent increase in the Council's borrowing requirement.

RESOLVED

- 1. that a net additional £5.032M to the original Capital Programme for 2011/12 be approved to fund the slippage from the previous years' Capital Programme. This includes slippage of £6.9M approved by the Executive on 12 July 2011;**
- 2. to recognise that there will be slippage of some expenditure into future years, and accordingly authorise the Executive Member for Corporate Resources to approve expenditure in the current financial year in respect of schemes that are included in future years of the Capital Programme but which can be brought forward and delivered in 2011/12, provided that the borrowing limits approved for the Capital programme for this financial year are not exceeded;**
- 3. that the inclusion of Flitwick Town Centre Development Scheme of £1.8M, be approved, subject to the Business Case; and**
- 4. that the inclusion of Channel Shift of £0.4M be approved and funded from the Customer Relationship Management budget allocation.**

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

that the revised Capital Programme for 2011/12 be approved as set out in the Executive report.

E/11/83

Channel Shift Strategy

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources seeking approval for capital funding for the Design Phase of the Channel Shift Strategy. The Channel Shift Strategy would determine the design and marketing of effective and efficient communication channels that were most appropriate for specific types of customer contact.

Members noted that this would be funded using existing capital allocated to Customer Relationship Management, as this was not needed at this current time.

Reason for decision: In order to progress the Channel Shift Strategy project, and identify the clear costs and benefits of the construction and implementation phase.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Channel Shift design phase, be approved, as a new scheme in the 2011/12 Capital Programme, based on the business case in Appendix 1 to the report;**

2. **that the Channel Shift scheme be funded by using existing capital budget currently allocated to Customer Relationship Management as this was now not needed for that purpose at this time; and**
3. **that this results in no increase in the overall budget for the Capital Programme in 2011/12.**

E/11/84

Landlords Electricity Supply Contract Tender

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources seeking delegated powers for the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing, in consultation with the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing, to award the tender for Landlords' electricity supplies. The Leader advised Members of the following amendment to recommendation 2, which was duly seconded:-

- “2. that delegated authority be given to the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing, in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to award the tender for the Landlords' electricity supplies to the most economically advantageous offer when prices are called.”

Reason for decision: To provide the most cost effective approach to procuring electricity for the Landlords' supplies.

RESOLVED

1. **that the recommendation to retender the Landlords' Electricity Supply contract as a fixed-price, fixed-term contract, be endorsed; and**
2. **that delegated authority be given to the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing, in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to award the tender for the Landlords' electricity supplies to the most economically advantageous offer when prices are called.**

E/11/85

Adult Social Care Health and Housing Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Peer Challenge

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that summarised the findings of the Local Government Group (LGG) Adult Safeguarding Peer Challenge, July 2011.

Members commended the Executive Member and the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing and her staff for building sound foundations upon which the Council could build in this key area of its responsibilities.

Reason for decision: To ensure the outcome of the peer challenge is effectively communicated throughout the Council.

RESOLVED

that the final report of the LGG Adult Safeguarding Peer Challenge attached at Appendix A to the report be noted.

E/11/86 Housing Services Responsive Repairs Contract

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member Social Care, Health and Housing that outlined the actions taken to ensure business continuity and minimise risks following the notification from the Responsive Repairs contractor that they were withdrawing from the Council's contract one month from 1 October 2011.

Reason for decision: To ensure service continuity.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the actions taken by Housing Services to ensure as far as possible continuity of service and minimisation of risk to the Council be noted; and**
- 2. that the award of the emergency interim contract be noted.**

E/11/87 Channel Shift Strategy

See minute E/11/84 above for details.

E/11/88 Housing Services Responsive Repairs Contract

See minute E/11/87 above for details.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 11.10 a.m.)

Chairman

Dated

Appendix A**Draft Executive response to the Recommendations from Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Highways and Transportation**

Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee have recommended to the Executive to:

- 1. note that the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorsed the draft Approach to Parking as the basis for the development of parking services in Central Bedfordshire, and that a further report will be brought to the Executive for consideration at the end of the public consultation period;**

Response: Public consultation on the draft Approach to Parking is ongoing with local communities and their parish councils. A final draft of the document will be updated based on the findings of this consultation for consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Committee before coming back to Executive early in the New Year.

- 2. resolve that controlled parking zones be used as a major measure for the management of car parking, provided that such zones are selectively introduced following proper evaluation and are sufficiently and adequately funded;**

Response: The Executive notes and agrees with O&SC's response on this issue. Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) are areas where all on-street parking is controlled to give priority to specific road user groups who must display a parking permit or voucher. The Authority is able to control parking in such a way that promotes its own policies e.g. restricting commuter parking around rail stations and encouraging short stay shopper parking in town centres. Prior to any new Controlled Parking Zone being introduced a full evaluation will be undertaken to ensure the schemes are at least self-financing.

- 3. resolve that residents' parking zones as such should not be used by the Council in the future as a parking control measure and that any further requests should be considered in the context of controlled parking zones;**

Executive recognises that, in many residential areas of Central Bedfordshire, the only practical way to control parking in favour of local residents is to use resident parking zones (RPZs). Executive is cognisant of the fact that the cost of implementing and administering RPZs in Central Bedfordshire currently exceeds the revenue received from such schemes. However, measures aimed at reducing administration costs are being introduced. These will include online and telephone scheme registration and payment facilities. It is expected that such changes will make RPZs at least cost neutral in future.

4. **note that the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the parking standards (as set out in Appendix C to the draft Approach to Parking) to be fair and reasonable, and that a further report will be brought back to the Executive for consideration at the end of the public consultation period;**

Response: The Executive notes and welcomes O&SC's response on this issue.

5. **resolve that the Managing Agency Contract (MAC) contract is the right type of contract for Central Bedfordshire Council and that such a contract should be the default option when considering options for the re-letting of the contract; (Please see section 2 of Part B of Appendix B)**

Response: The Executive notes and welcomes O&SC's response on this issue. The existing MAC is due to expire at the end of March 2016. In 2013, work will start a new procurement process to prepare a replacement contract and will use this feedback as the basis for that work.

6. **endorse the Highway and Transportation Task Group's conclusion that the MAC contract is operating well and delivering value for money;**

Response: The Executive notes and welcomes O&SC's response on this issue.

7. **endorse the potential improvements as identified in paragraphs 57 to 62 of the attached report of the Assistant Director (Highways and Transport) to the Highways and Transportation Task Force of 24 August 2011 and that those which have not yet been implemented be authorised by the relevant Executive Member (or Executive if deemed necessary) for action by officers and Amey;**

Response: The Executive notes and agrees with O&SC's response on this issue. Over the coming 12 months, improvements will be progressed around communication, scheme consultation, traffic sensitive streets, surface dressing and lighting columns as defined in the above mentioned report.

8. **agree additional funds of £4m for each of the next four years to be included in the highways maintenance budget; (Please see section 3 of Part B of Appendix B)**

Response: The Executive notes and will give consideration to this response as part of the 2012/13 budget process in relation to this capital spend item.

9. **that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee requests the officers to explore with Amey a mechanism to ensure that cases retain their Highways Help Desk reference number when they are passed on to other teams etc within the Council so that they can continue to be tracked;**

Response: The Executive notes and agrees with O&SC's response on this issue. Work will be progressed between the Helpdesk and service areas to facilitate this.

10. **that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee requests the officers to:**

- i) **make provision for centralised information to be made available so that Members can be fully briefed about the emerging situation in respect of planned infrastructure and other developments over the ensuing three months;**

Response: The Executive notes and agrees with O&SC's response on this issue. Work is underway to develop a single electronic repository for planned highway infrastructure which can be interrogated by Members.

- ii) **explore the implementation of a computerised GIS map to support such an arrangement;**

Response: The Executive notes and agrees with O&SC's response on this issue.

- iii) **request Amey to liaise with the Council's planning division to ensure Amey is better apprised of matters such as Section 106 agreements, major schemes etc; and**

Response: The Executive notes and agrees with O&SC's response on this issue. Improved liaison arrangements are being developed and will be supported by the emerging GIS system for highway infrastructure.

- iv) **requests the officers to update and reissue to all members the "Highways and Transport – Service provision Guide for Members" along with the one page map and contact details of Amey's area teams.**

Response: The Executive notes and agrees with O&SC's response on this issue. The Guide is currently being updated and will be re-issued to Members in the coming weeks.

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